



BLM AVIATION

TACTICAL TIMES

A SINGLE ENGINE AIRTANKER NEWSLETTER



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NOTES FROM THE PROGRAM MANGER

The 2012 fire season is in full swing, with SEATs flying close to 3,300 hours since April 1st. Through the months of June and July SEATs have averaged around 100 hrs of flight time each day. The operational tempo has been high and I would expect it to remain this way well into September.

We have had a hand full of issues arise this season that speak to a loss of situational awareness by management, flight crews and/or ground crews:

A vehicle damaged a parked SEAT, a SEAT taxiing with tools left on wing, a SEAT was fueled with AV Gas, SEAT taxiing in front of a GA aircraft and 2 instances

of pilots loosing their situational awareness while in the Fire Traffic Area.

These examples demonstrate the need for all portions of the Aerial Fire Fighting team; SEAT manager, pilot, ground crew and aviation managers to work and communicate as a team to ensure that everyone's situational awareness is high.

Aerial fire fighting is an unforgiving business that demands each of us, as professionals, to devote our complete attention to all aspects of our business.

From the morning briefing and preflight through putting the aircraft to bed at the end of the day our focus



cannot drift from the task at hand while anticipating the challenges that await each of us through the course of our day.

Thank you for your continued vigilance and commitment to serving fire fighters safely and efficiently.

Fly Safe – Operate Safe

Glen Claypool

BLM National SEAT Program Manager

CONTRACT CONSIDERATIONS –MCTF??

The Mission Currency Training Flight (MCTF) clause of the contract applies when a pilot has not flown on a fire in the previous 14 days. Mission Currency Training Flights are required by Contract on both the National On Call and Exclusive Use contract. The contractor will be paid for all Mission Currency

Training Flights. SEAT managers should advise local fire management several days in advance of the need for a Mission Currency Flights. This will allow time to secure funding while allowing time to plan and organize the Mission Currency Training Flight. Two points of clarification:

1. MCTF's should

touch on as many elements of the SEAT Mission as is practical given the resources available.

2. If circumstances preclude the Government from conducting a MCTF, the pilot and aircraft will remain available under the contract to be dispatched.

Link to [Mission Currency FAQ](#)

2012 STATISTICS TO DATE

Top 3 GACCs

- East Basin 825 hrs
- Rocky Mtn 808 hrs
- West Basin 694 hrs

2011 vs 2012

- June 11' 1,287 hrs
- June 12' 1,506 hrs

2011 hrs flown to date:

- 2,046

2012 hrs flown to date:

- 3,266

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A Publication of the
National Wildfire
Coordinating Group

Interagency SEAT Operations Guide

PMS 506 May 2011
NFES 18844

POLICY— SEAT BASE MINIMUMS REQUIREMENTS (ISOG Ch 6 VII/VIII)

No matter what category of base or locations SEATs are operated from, the following **minimum** standards are required for each base:

1. The using agency has made appropriate arrangements for using the ramp space and any facilities at the SEAT base.
2. The SEAT Manager is provided with a complete briefing about the base location and operational procedures.
3. A crash rescue plan is developed for the SEAT base.

4. The SEAT Manager is briefed on the agency's procedures for HazMat spills.

5. A Risk Management Worksheet (RMW) or Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) is available to the SEAT Manager.

6. Adequate facilities and logistical support are in place.

7. An assessment of security concerns has been made by using agency.

8. A jettison area must be designated for the base.

9. A VHF-AM radio is available for monitoring the ramp frequency.

10. A method is established for providing the SEAT Manager with daily intelligence used for briefing pilots.

11. A SEAT Base Operating Plan is required for any SEAT base categorized as a level II through IV. The SEAT Manager will ensure the operating plan is updated during the time frame they are assigned to the base.

2012 SEAT SAFECOM's

To date-20 Total

- 9 Maintenance
- 5 Hazard
 - * 2-Crosswind
 - * 2-Pilot Error
 - * 1-Overload
- 2 Incident with Potential
- 2 Management
- 1 Communication
- 1 Airspace

2012 SEAT SAFECOM's

To date- by State

- 4 Utah
- 3 Arizona
- 3 Idaho
- 2 Colorado
- 2 Nevada
- 1 Texas
- 1 Oregon
- 1 Montana
- 1 New Mexico
- 1 Wyoming
- 1 Alaska

SEAT MANAGER REMINDERS

Last year the National SECO began requesting that SEAT managers submit their flight hours each day. For 2012 this requirement will continue, however we will now require that SEAT managers submit the Daily Operations worksheet ([SEAT-002](#)) each day. The ISOG requires that the daily operations worksheet be completed at the completion of each shift. This form cap-

tures information that will allow the National SECO to keep accurate use statistics and provide current information when NMAC needs to make asset allocation and reallocation decisions. Additionally we are asking that SEAT managers indicate if the fires where under the USFS operational control. This is important information that will assist the USFS require-

ment to compile data on which USFS fires had retardant dropped on them.

The SEAT Daily Operations Worksheet can be either sent in by Fax or electronically to:
National SECO Desk
1-208-387-5419 (Office)
1-208-850-2780 (Cell)
1-208-387-5199 (Fax)
Email-
ilmfccopdsp60@blm.gov

SAFETY-PRE-FLIGHTS

Proper mission preparation and effective crew resource management (CRM) includes a preflight and post-flight of the aircraft by the pilot and a "look over" by all personnel (SEMG) involved in the flight.

It is the responsibility of the Pilot-In-Command (PIC) to conduct a thorough pre and post-flight of the aircraft. Ample time should be

planned prior to the flight to conduct a thorough preflight. It is the governments responsibility to ensure that time is allowed for SEAT pilots to perform their pre and post flight inspections of the aircraft within their duty day.

The BLM has had 7 known reported preflight related issues among all categories of aircraft. Issues have been noticed during the pre-start

phase, taxi, during flight, post flight and one even resulted in an emergency landing.

Remember:

Situational awareness is everyone's responsibility





BLM SEAT PROGRAM

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MORE INFORMATION ON THE SEAT
PROGRAM IS AVAILABLE ON THE WEB AT

[WWW.BLM.GOV/NIFC/ST/EN/PROG/
FIRE/AVIATION/AIOPS/SEAT.HTML](http://WWW.BLM.GOV/NIFC/ST/EN/PROG/FIRE/AVIATION/AIOPS/SEAT.HTML)

**PROFESSIONALS SERVING FIRE
FIGHTERS SAFELY AND EFFICIENTLY**

How to Properly Refuse Risk (Aviation)

Every individual (government and contracted employees) have the **right** and **obligation** to report safety problems affecting his or her safety and has the right to contribute ideas to correct the hazard. In return, supervisors are expected to give these concerns and ideas serious consideration. **When an individual feels an assignment is unsafe, he or she also has the obligation to identify, to the degree possible, safe alternatives for completing that assignment.** Turning down an assignment is one possible outcome of managing risk.

A "turn down" is a situation where an individual has determined that he or she cannot undertake an assignment as given and is unable to negotiate an alternative solution. The turn down of an assignment must be based on an assessment of risks and the ability of the individual or organization to control or mitigate those risks. Individuals may turn down an assignment because of safety reasons when:

1. There is a violation of regulated safe aviation practices.
2. Environmental conditions make the work unsafe.
3. They lack the necessary qualifications or experience.

Individuals will directly inform their supervisor that they are turning down the assignment as given. The most appropriate means of documented turn down criteria is using the **Aviation Watch Out Situations** (page 17 IRPG).

Proper handling of turn downs provides accountability for decisions and initiates communication of safety concerns within the incident organization.

Entire document on refusing risk can be found at <http://www.wildfirelessons.net/documents/>

RETARDANT LINES OF THOUGHT-THE MARSH FUNNEL

The Marsh Funnel is the only test that will accurately track viscosity in the gum thickened retardant, whereas the micro motion meter and the refractometer only track density.

Viscosity should be tested every 5-10 loads by either contractor or government personnel and analyzed by the end of each day. Records need to be kept at the base.

Materials Needed: 1. Marsh Funnel: For low-viscosity products such as Phos-Chek LC-95A, use small tip, 3/16" diameter.

For high-viscosity products such as Phos-Chek P100, use the large tip, 17/64" diameter.

2. Container marked to 1 quart
3. Stopwatch

4. Thermometer

Method: Allow the test sample to stand until it reaches room temperature (70°F) and all air bubbles are dissipated since both of these factors have an influence on viscosity.

Ensure that the properly modified funnel is clean and dry and secured in an upright position. Cover the funnel opening with a finger while pouring the test sample through the screen until the sample exactly reaches the bottom of the screen. Water enhancers should be poured around the screen as they may clog the screen rather than running through.

Keeping the funnel over the measuring container, remove finger from the opening and at the same time start the timer.

Measure the time required for exactly 1 quart (946 ml) of the test sample to flow out of the funnel.

Record the flow-through time and the temperature of the test sample.

Optimum Marsh Funnel drain times:

- LC-95A = 30-37 seconds through the small tip.
- P100 = 23-30 seconds through the large tip.
- D75R & F = 24-34 sec through the large tip.

